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PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE
UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
Washington, D.C. 20231

U.S. PTO
09/14/98

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09/04/98

TRANSMITTAL LETTER FOR NEW APPLICATION

Sir:

Transmitted herewith for filing is a(n) ☒ Original patent application.
☒ Utility ☐ Design
☐ Continuation-in-part application

INVENTOR(S): Leland Lester, David Iglehart, Stephen J. Swain & William J. Beyda

TITLE: AN AUTOMATED MICROPHONE SWITCH CONTROLLED BY A CTI COMBO

Enclosed are:

- ☒ The Declaration and Power of Attorney ☒ signed ☐ unsigned
☒ Five (5) sheets of drawings ☐ formal drawings ☒ informal drawings (one set)
☒ Assignment to Siemens Business Communication Systems, Inc.
☐ Associate Power of Attorney
☐ Priority Document(s) ☐ (fee \$)
☒ Filing fee has been calculated as shown below (other than small entity):

For	Number Filed	Number Extra	Rate	Additional Fees
Total Claims	16 - 20	= 0	x \$ 22	\$0.00
Indep. Claims	6 - 3	= 3	x \$ 82	\$246.00
<input type="checkbox"/> First Presentation of a Multiple Dependent Claim				x \$260 \$-0-
Extension Fee	1st Month \$110.00	2nd Month \$390.00	3rd Month \$930.00	4th Month \$1470.00
Basic filing Fee				\$790.00
Total				\$1036.00

Please charge my Deposit Account No. 19-2179 in the amount of \$1036.00. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-2179 pursuant to 37 CFR 1.25. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

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Date: 9/4/98

Telephone: 408/492-7324

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Date of Deposit: Sept. 4, 1998

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**AN AUTOMATED MICROPHONE SWITCH CONTROLLED BY A CTI
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Typed Name: Jacquie Sears

AN AUTOMATED MICROPHONE SWITCH CONTROLLED BY A CTI COMBO

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to telephone headsets and the like, and more particularly, to an apparatus for switching a headset microphone between a telephone and a second device.

Background of the Invention

5 Headsets provide a number of advantages for both telephone communication and operation of computer or recording devices. Consider a worker who works in an environment in which he and his co-workers work in open cubicles instead of closed offices. The worker finds it advantageous to use a headset when making telephone calls, since the headset reduces the interference from the background noise in the work place, and also frees the worker's hands to type on a workstation during the call. If the user uses
10 voice control programs on the computer or voice recording devices, each time the worker switches between the telephone and another use, she must remove her headset. During hectic times of alternate telephone calls and computer or recording device use, switching between devices can cause error or greatly reduce efficiency.

15 Broadly, it is the object of the present invention to provide an improved telephone headset arrangement.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide an apparatus that allows the user to conveniently switch voice path between a telephone call and a personal computer (PC) or audio recording device without removing the user's headset.

These and other objects of the present invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from the following detailed description of the invention and the accompanying drawings.

Summary of the Invention

5 The present invention is an apparatus for connecting a headset microphone alternately to a telephone line or to a second device, such as a PC or recording device. Preferably, the system uses a computer telephone integration (CTI) module. The apparatus includes a switching circuit with connectors to the device, telephone and headset. The switching circuit connects the telephone connector to the headset connector
10 in response to an off-hook condition; the microphone is automatically connected when the telephone is answered. Alternatively, the voice path connector can connect to the telephone upon sensing a voltage greater than a predetermined threshold on the telephone line; the microphone switches to the telephone in response to a ring. When the voltage sensed returns to a value less than the predetermined threshold value (when the telephone
15 goes on-hook), the switching circuit reconnects the microphone to the alternative device.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Figure 1 is a block diagram of a headset switching apparatus according to the present invention.

Figure 2 is a flow chart of the steps of the present invention.

20 Figure 3 is a diagram of a circuit used to implement the present invention.

Figure 4 is a diagram of components used in the present invention.

Figure 5 is a block diagram showing the function of components of Figure 4.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

The present invention is an apparatus that connects a headset microphone to either a telephone line or a second device, such as a personal computer or a recording device. The user wears a single headset for both uses. The user switches from the alternative device to the telephone by causing the telephone to go off hook. Alternatively, a telephone ring signal can cause the module to switch to the telephone microphone. The present invention senses the voltage on the telephone input and switches the headset to the telephone connection from the alternative device connection. When the telephone goes back on hook, the apparatus of the present invention reconnects the headset to the alternative device.

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a headset 110 whose microphone is connected to a switching apparatus 100 via connector 106, in accordance with the present invention. Switching apparatus 100 includes a connector 104 for an alternative device 112 and a connector 108 that connects to a telephone line 115 which is also connected to telephone 114. Connector 106 is switched from connector 104 to connector 108 when voltage-sensing switch 102 detects a voltage greater than a predetermined threshold voltage across the telephone connector 108. This voltage difference is generated when telephone 114 goes off hook. When telephone 114 goes back on hook, voltage-sensing switch 102 detects the change in voltage on connector 108 and reconnects connector 106 to connector 104.

FIG. 2 shows steps of a method 200 in accordance with the present invention. The method begins with a step 210. At step 210, voltage from telephone 114 is monitored. If the voltage from telephone 114 is greater than a predetermined threshold, the microphone of headset 110 is connected to the telephone, at a step 212. This routes the headset's talk path to the telephone. The method then proceeds to step 210, and continues to monitor the voltage. When the voltage drops below the threshold, headset

110 is connected to alternative device 112, at a step 214. The method then proceeds to step 210, and continues to monitor the voltage.

While the present invention has been described in terms of a separate module, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that an off-hook switching circuit can be provided in the present invention which performs the operation of taking the telephone off-hook in response to depressing a button or throwing a switch. Similarly, the present invention may be included in computer systems as part of a telephony board.

An implementation of the invention is shown in FIG. 3. The device shown in FIG. 3 comprises three diodes, three op-amps, 8 resistors, a capacitor, a varistor, a relay, and a transistor.

Diode D1 and op-amp A1 combine to form a super diode in a peak rectifier circuit. The super diode combines with capacitor C1 and resistor R2 to serve as a precision peak-hold rectifier. If input (line voltage) is greater than the output of the op-amp A1, diode D1 will be ON and will close the negative feedback loop through a buffer op-amp A2 and resistor R1. The output voltage of op-amp A1 then will follow the input and supply the current to charge the holding capacitor C1. Beyond the positive peak of the input voltage, op-amp A1 will see a negative input. This causes the output to be negative and turns off diode D1.

Op-amp A2 serves as a buffer with high input impedance and low bias current. This allows the discharge-time/holding-time to be controlled precisely by resistor R2. Note that additional diode D2 is in the circuit to act as a caching diode to prevent negative saturation and delay of op-amp A1.

Third op-amp A3 with its associated components serves as a simple positive feedback comparator with hysteresis. The inverting input voltage is set at a desired threshold value. Note that varistor V1 allows the user to vary switch level according to

his or her unique equipment. The rest of the circuit at the output of op-amp A3 is used to drive relay K1.

A system 400 uses a computer telephone integration (CTI) headset module 402, as shown in FIGURE 4. In FIG. 4, a switch 403 is external to the CTI module. The control signals from the CTI module 402 and the wireless base module 410 are used by the switch module 403 to switch the audio path. The audio path headset microphone 406 is switched between a phone 412 attached to the CTI and the external device (in this example, computer 408).

In the embodiment shown in FIGURE 5, the CTI module includes a switch 403, a processor 405, and three RJ-11 ports, audio ports 407 and 411, and a control port 409. Two control signals, illustrated by arrows 420 and 422, connect the base unit and control port 409. The CTI provides a signal (depicted by arrow 422) to communicate that the phone is off-hook (or, alternatively, ringing). The headset base 410 provides another signal (depicted by arrow 420) to indicate that the base is active. When both of these signals are false, a switch in the module routes the microphone's talk path to the computer 408 (or, alternatively, to another external output). Otherwise, the output is routed to the telephone via audio port 411.

In a wireless system, signals between the components can be by infrared or radio signal. (The dashed line between headset 404 and base unit schematically illustrates a wireless connection.) As will be apparent to those skilled in the art, a system in accordance with the present invention can be implemented by a combination of wireless signals and wires. For example, signals between the headset and base unit and between the base unit and module can be wireless, while signals between a plug-in module and PC travel by wire.

The CTI can optionally include speech recognition. In one embodiment, a voice command recognized by the speech recognition function switches from the telephone call

to the PC. The voice command automatically mutes the telephone call and switches to the computer. When the computer function is finished, the user uses a second voice command that automatically releases the mute and switches the talk path back to the telephone microphone. The voice recognition switching function uses voice recognition software in base unit 410 to switch the talk path from the telephone to computer 408. Computer 408 also includes voice recognition software.

The invention can be used in conjunction with the system described in co-pending application serial no. 08/747,468, "Apparatus and Method for Automatically Switching a Headset Between a Telephone and a Second Audio Source" by Iglehart *et al.*, which is incorporated herein by reference. That application describes switching the speaker (audio) portion of the headset. Used in combination with the invention described herein, a user can switch either or both of the speaker and microphone functions between telephone headset functions and auxiliary devices such as computers, speakers, and recording devices. The invention is applicable to other embodiments than a headset and telephone. For example, a microphone in a speaker phone could be used alternately to communicate with a computer and a telephone. In a car, a cordless telephone and alternative device could alternately use the same microphone. Various other modifications to the present invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from the foregoing description and accompanying drawings. Accordingly, the present invention is to be limited solely by the scope of the following claims.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An apparatus for connecting a microphone alternately to a telephone line and an alternative device, said apparatus comprising:

a device connector for connecting said apparatus to said alternative device;

a telephone connector for connecting said apparatus to said telephone line;

5 a microphone connector for connecting said apparatus to said microphone; and

a switching circuit connected to said device, telephone and microphone connectors, said switching circuit connecting said telephone connector to said microphone connector in response to sensing a voltage greater than a predetermined threshold on said telephone line, and said switching circuit connecting said microphone connector to said
10 alternative device connector when the voltage sensed on said telephone line is less than said predetermined threshold voltage.

2. An apparatus as in Claim 1 wherein said switching circuit is included in a computer telephone integration (CTI) module.

15 3. An apparatus as in Claim 1 wherein said device is a personal computer.

4. An apparatus for connecting a headset alternately to a telephone line and an alternative device, said apparatus comprising:

a device connector for connecting said apparatus to said alternative device;

a telephone connector for connecting said apparatus to said telephone line;

a microphone connector for connecting said apparatus to said headset; and

a switching circuit connected to said device, telephone and headset connectors, said switching circuit connecting said telephone connector to said headset connector in response to sensing a voltage greater than a predetermined threshold on said telephone line, and said switching circuit connecting said headset connector to said device connector when the voltage sensed on said telephone line is less than said predetermined threshold voltage.

5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75 80 85 90 95 100 105 110 115 120 125 130 135 140 145 150 155 160 165 170 175 180 185 190 195 200 205 210 215 220 225 230 235 240 245 250 255 260 265 270 275 280 285 290 295 300 305 310 315 320 325 330 335 340 345 350 355 360 365 370 375 380 385 390 395 400 405 410 415 420 425 430 435 440 445 450 455 460 465 470 475 480 485 490 495 500 505 510 515 520 525 530 535 540 545 550 555 560 565 570 575 580 585 590 595 600 605 610 615 620 625 630 635 640 645 650 655 660 665 670 675 680 685 690 695 700 705 710 715 720 725 730 735 740 745 750 755 760 765 770 775 780 785 790 795 800 805 810 815 820 825 830 835 840 845 850 855 860 865 870 875 880 885 890 895 900 905 910 915 920 925 930 935 940 945 950 955 960 965 970 975 980 985 990 995

5. An apparatus as in Claim 4 wherein said switching circuit is included in a computer telephone integration (CTI) module.

6. An apparatus as in Claim 4 wherein said device is a personal computer.

7. A method for connecting a microphone alternately to an alternative device and a telephone line, said method comprising the steps of:

connecting said microphone, telephone line, and alternative device to a switching device;

sensing the voltage on said telephone line; and

switching said microphone to said telephone line whenever said voltage is greater than a predetermined threshold voltage, and to said alternative device whenever said voltage is less than said predetermined voltage.

8. A method as in Claim 7 wherein said switching is implemented by a computer telephone integration (CTI) module.

9. An apparatus as in Claim 7 wherein said device is a personal computer.

10. A method for connecting a headset alternately to an alternative device and a telephone line, said method comprising the steps of:

connecting said headset, telephone line, and alternative device to a switching device;

5 sensing the voltage on said telephone line; and

switching said headset to said telephone line whenever said voltage is greater than a predetermined threshold voltage, and to said alternative device whenever said voltage is less than said predetermined voltage.

11. A method as in Claim 10 wherein said switching is implemented by a
10 computer telephone integration (CTI) module.

12. A method for switching between a personal computer and a telephone, comprising the steps of:

issuing a voice command to switch from a telephone call to a personal computer.

13. A method as in Claim 12 wherein said switching is implemented by a
15 computer telephone integration (CTI) module.

14. An apparatus for switching between a personal computer and a telephone, comprising:

a device connector for connecting said apparatus to said personal computer;

a telephone connector for connecting said apparatus to said telephone line;

a microphone connector for connecting said apparatus to said microphone; and

a switching circuit connected to said device, telephone and microphone connectors, said switching circuit connecting said telephone connector to said microphone connector in response to recognizing a first voice command, and said switching circuit
5 connecting said microphone connector to said device connector in response to recognizing a second voice command.

15. An apparatus as in Claim 14 wherein said switching circuit is included in a computer telephone integration (CTI) module.

10 16. An apparatus as in Claim 14 wherein said device is a personal computer.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An apparatus and method are disclosed for connecting a headset microphone alternately to a telephone line and an alternative device. The apparatus includes a device connector for connecting the apparatus to the alternative device, a telephone connector
5 for connecting the apparatus to the telephone line, and a microphone connector for connecting the apparatus to the microphone. The apparatus also includes a switching circuit connected to the device, telephone, and headset connectors. The switching circuit can be used with or included in a CTI module. The switching circuit connects the telephone connector to the headset connector in response to sensing a voltage greater than
10 a predetermined threshold on the telephone line. When the voltage sensed returns to a value less than the predetermined threshold value, the switching circuit reconnects the headset connector to the device connector.

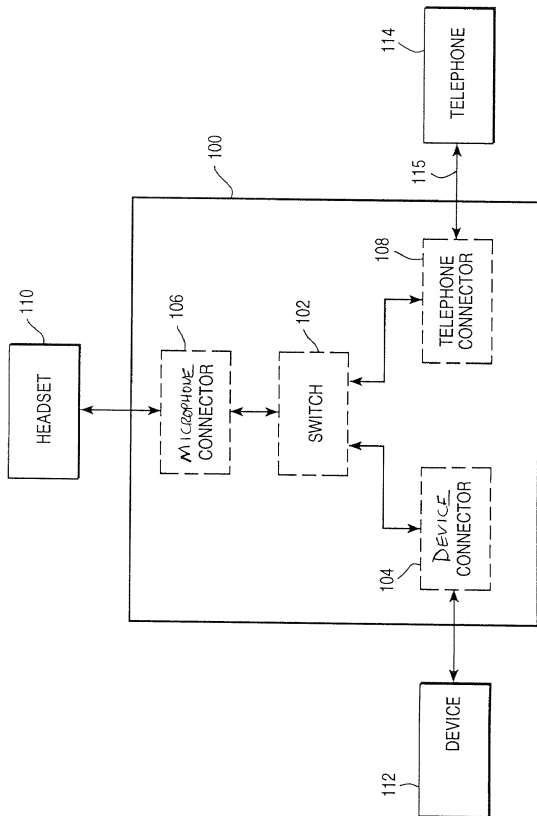


FIG. 1

200

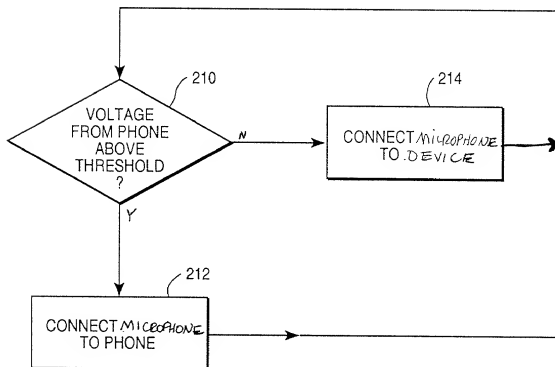


FIG. 2

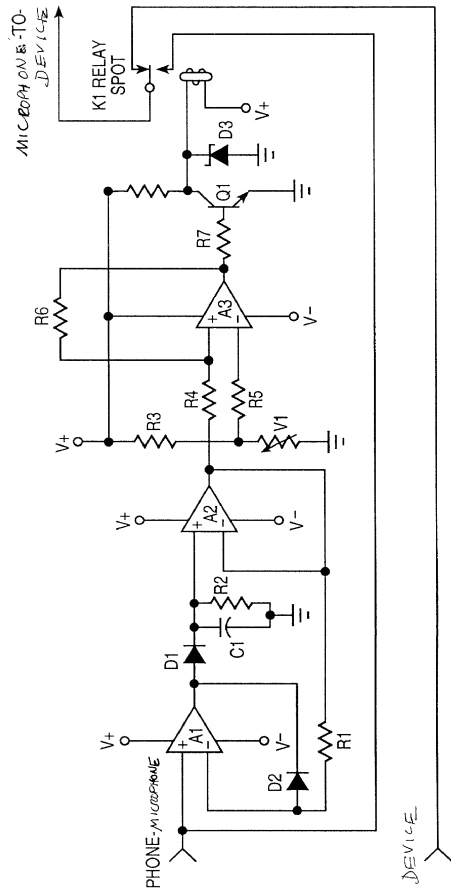


FIG 3

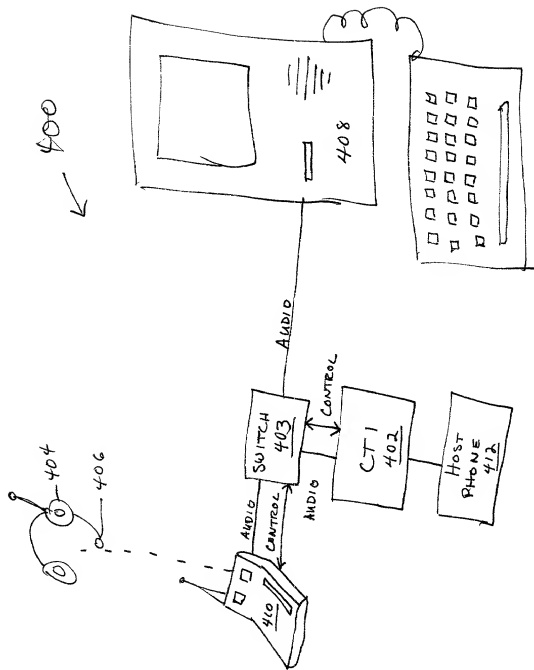


FIG. 4

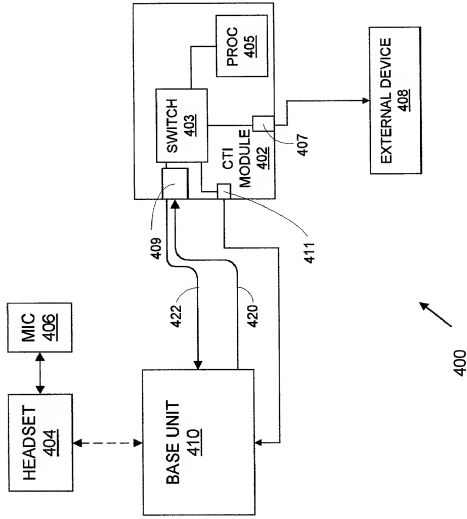


FIGURE 5

DECLARATION FOR PATENT APPLICATION & POWER OF ATTORNEY

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name,

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

**AN AUTOMATED MICROPHONE SWITCH CONTROLLED BY A CTI
COMBO**

the specification of which (check one)

☒ is attached hereto.

☐ was filed on _____ as Application Serial No.

and was amended on _____ (if applicable)

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations § 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Codes, § 119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

PRIOR FOREIGN APPLICATION(S)

Priority claimed

(Number)	(Country)	(Day/month/year filed)	Yes	No
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(Number)	(Country)	(Day/month/year filed)	Yes	No
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(Number)	(Country)	(Day/month/year filed)	Yes	No
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I hereby claim the benefits under Title 35, United States Code, § 120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this

application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

(Application Serial No.)	(Filing date)	(Status) (patented,pending,abandoned)
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(Application Serial No.)	(Filing date)	(Status) (patented,pending,abandoned)
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Power of Attorney: As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith. (list name and registration number)

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I hereby declare that all statements made herein on my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true, and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issuing thereon.

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8/31/98

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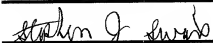
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